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REMARKSGenerally

By this amendment and response, Claims 51, 52, 54, and 56 have been amended. Claims 66-68 have been added. The new claims for treating a subject at risk of developing cirrhosis are supported throughout the specification, as for example, at page 15, lines 3-10.

Obviousness-Type Double Patenting Rejection

The June 2, 2003 Office Action rejected Claims 26 and 27 under judicially created obviousness-type double patenting over Claim 11 of USPN 6248725. Pursuant to 37 CFR 1.321(c), Applicants are willing to file a terminal disclaimer relating to Claims 26 and 27 upon allowance of the pending claims.

Claim Objections

Claim 51 was objected to because it contained the abbreviation HGF without prior definition in the claims. This informality has been corrected.

Claim Rejections—35 USC 112(1)

Claims 51-65 have been rejected because “the specification, while being enabling for a method for treating cirrhosis of the liver, does not reasonably provide enablement for a method of preventing cirrhosis of the liver” (June 2, 2003 Office Action, page 3). Solely to speed allowance and without prejudice to further prosecution, Applicants have amended Claim 51 to remove the

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phrase "or preventing." Thus, Claims 51-65 now are directed solely to a method of treating and are enabled according to the Office Action. Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of this rejection.

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CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, it is submitted that the claims are allowable, and issuance of a Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested. The Commissioner is authorized to charge any fees required by the filing of these papers, and to credit any overpayment to Perkins Coie's Deposit Account No. 50-0665. If Applicants can do anything more to expedite this application, Applicants ask the Examiner to contact the undersigned at (310) 788-9900.

Respectfully submitted,

PERKINS COIE LLP

Dated: August 29, 2003By: Lauren Sliger

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